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ABSTRACT

Marked by a history of political opposition and fluctuations of control that have occurred in the name of national development and modernization, the Korean press (consisting of 34 newspapers) today produces a somewhat typical eight-page newspaper that is a mixture of Korean and Chinese characters. As most of the newspapers are clustered in the capital city of Seoul, so are the major institutions of higher learning. Although an estimated 250 students receive journalism degrees annually, Korean journalism departments face the following problems: a lack of teaching materials and textbooks; a lack of understanding by media practitioners regarding the importance of professional journalism education; a lack of coordination between the journalism departments and media agencies, particularly in the area of hiring students to work for newspapers; a shortage of experienced teaching staff and necessary instructional facilities; and the failure of journalism graduates to pass the tests for employment administered by various newspaper companies and radio-television agencies. (MAI)

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EDUCATION FOR JOURNALISM IN KOREA

A Paper Presented to the Session "Teaching Asian Communications: An Assessment", Association for Education in Journalism Convention, University of Washington, Seattle, August 13-16, 1978.

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EDUCATION FOR JOURNALISM IN KOREA

The Korean press was started under a very difficult political situation. The Hansungsun-bo (1883), published every ten days, was a government gazette rather than a popular newspaper. A true modern newspaper was the Tongnip Shinmun, a triweekly, published on 7 April 1896 by Jai-phil Suh, an American-educated Korean reformer and patriot. This publication date was accepted in 1957 as a Korean newspaper anniversary. Tongnip, the title of this paper equals "independence," couching a strong political flavor. This paper attacked the Japanese influence--which was to bring the seizure of Korea by Japan 14 years later. Syngman Rhee, the first President of the Republic of Korea, also founded a newspaper, called the Maiyil Shinmun (daily newspaper) in 1896 for a similar purpose. Rhee was imprisoned for his reform leadership.

The Japanese occupation (1910-1945) killed almost all Korean resistant newspapers. The 1919 nationwide resistance movement, called the March First Revolution, had the harsh Japanese rule loosened. Three newspapers, including Dong-A and Chosun, appeared in 1920. These papers suffered frequent closures and threats. With liberation in 1945, newspapers increased suddenly, totaling 85 dailies, all politically-oriented--rightist, leftist and neutralist.

In Japan, the prominent educators founded newspapers as an instrument for education and progress, not as a political instrument. Yukichi Fukuzawa, founder of Keio University, and Count Okuma, founder of Waseda University, established the Jiji and the Hochi, respectively, for years the best known and influential dailies. Journalism and academic education went hand in hand in Japan (Williams, 1928, p.6). Asahi was founded in Osaka in 1879 by Murayama, one of the greatest of Japanese journalists in the Meiji era (Mott,

1947, p. 332).

The Korean press, after liberation, faced a period of ideological conflict (1945-48) and a period of political opposition to Rhee's government (1948-1960). A glimpse of newspaper history, therefore, tells the story of political resistance. A 1958 survey said that at least 60% of the 42 daily newspapers were anti-government in tone, and altogether they comprised about 80% of the total circulation (Oliver, 1958, p. 85).

The press since 1961 has faced fluctuations of control in the name of national development and modernization. The spirit of political opposition has remained unabated. A plurality (41%) of the college students have a sense of opposition to the government--basic disagreement between Korean youth and government leaders (USIA, 1967, p. 3). In 1973 (November-December), about 500 young reporters of Dong-A and of another, staged strikes to demand the press freedom. The government once withdrew all advertisements from the Dong-A Ilbo to remain advertising-free.

Many owners of papers have not thought of a newspaper as a self-supporting enterprise, but rather as an institution or activity to be supported as a public service or for the influence and prestige derived (Rowland, 1958, p. 451). The press has been dependent on wealthy backers, being under ownership or influence of big business. The average ratio of income from subscriptions and advertising is 52 to 47 (Koh, 1968, p. 8). No auditing bureau for newspaper circulation exists.

In the U.S. advertisement is the main source of income for daily papers, about 72% (Bagdikian, 1971, p. 210).

2. The Press vs. Literacy

Korea has 34 newspapers of which Seoul has 14 (41%). Seoul is the capital city of this country. Among 34 papers are two English and two morning dailies, the rest being evening dailies. The nation's largest circulation paper is Seoul's Dong-A with 655,000. Seoul's average circulation is 192,214; its equivalent being 44,350 locally (Ed & Pub Yearbook 1976). The audience per 1000 inhabitants: daily, 138; radio, 128; TV, 28 (Unesco, 1975).

The typical Korean newspaper consists of eight pages, each 13 by 20 inches, six columns wide. The size of newspaper is subject to 42 pages per week regardless of its popularity. Newspapers are published Monday through Saturday, but not on Sunday.

Page One is held for political and government news, Page Two for economics, Page Three for foreign news, Page Four for opinion, science and education, Page Five for culture and history, Page Six for community and sports, Page Seven for society, and Page Eight either for sports or for a full-page advertisement. Each page saves about 30% of its space for advertisement.

All Korean dailies, except Seoul Shinmun, are a mixture of Korean and Chinese characters. Hence, newspaper readership involves mastering Korean language, in addition to learning a considerable amount of Chinese characters, the minimum being a government-set 1,300. The usage of Chinese characters hinders mechanization of typesetting.

A content look of the Dong-A Ilbo for one week (July 17-22, 1978: Monday through Saturday) shows that spacing for the advertisement-news ratio is 39% to 61% in favor of news (U.S. dailies assign 61% of all pages for

advertisement). The table below elicits the kind of news treatment by category:

Category	Percent
society & urban problems	19
politics & government	13
international	12
culture & history	11
economics	10
editorial and opinion	9
sports	8
science & education	6
non-fiction series	5
defense & security	3
miscellaneous	4
Total	100

Economic conditions slacken the press development. Newsprint shortage is serious. No newspaper has ever published beyond 48 pages per week, its fluctuations having shown: 48 (1942), 38 (1964), 36 (1966), and 42 (1978).

Seoul's population, comprising 16% (5.5m) of the nation's total, consumes 75% of the entire newspaper circulation (2,705,000/3,592,000). A heavy cluster of newspapers in Seoul does not, per se, hint a comparable tendency of readership. In Japan also, Tokyo has 11% of national population, but Tokyo-based dailies have 70% of national circulation (Bagdikian, 1971, p. 70). The narrowness of the country and/or administrative centralization make this tendency likely even in the developed countries.

As newspapers are heavily clustered in Seoul, so are institutions of higher learning, a potential variable for newspaper readership. Among 27 major universities (4-year) in the nation, Seoul has eighteen, its enrollment occupying 65% (109,019/166,629). The "major" universities denote the schools not only nationally known but listed in the World of Learning 1977-78

with enrollments. The Unesco statistics (1975) say that there are 157 third-level schools--65 four-year universities and colleges and 88 two-year junior colleges with a combined enrollment of 223,000, the figure being eight per cent of the college age population. The comparable figures for the U.S. and Japan are: 20% and 26.8%.

The rate of illiteracy is on the wane, the total being 12.4%. Its urban-rural and male-female ratios are still significant: 5.7-17.8 and 5.6-19.0. The urban-rural breakdown by sex shows a wider gap: urban male and female is 2.0 and 9.3, its comparable figures by rural being 8.5 and 26.6. The range is 2.0 to 26.6.

As late as 1920 only 44% of the population in the age group 9-49 were literate in the U.S.; today the comparable figure is 99.7%. In 1920, 57.6% of the men were literate whereas only 32.3% of the women were; 73.5% of urbanites were literate but only 27.8% of the rural dwellers were. By 1970 the differences amounted to only fractions of one per cent (Trewartha, 1978, p. 115).

Japan's illiteracy was only 0.9% in 1928 (Williams, 1928, p. 4). In 1960: the total= 2.2%, male=1.0% and female= 3.3%; urban population= 1.1%, its male= 0.5% and its female= 1.7%; rural population= 3.1%, its male= 1.4% and its female= 4.6%. The range is 0.5 to 4.6 (Unesco, 1976); today illiteracy is almost nil (Trewartha, 1978, p. 244).

Public expenditure on higher learning is very small with 7.7%, most of its expenses being spent for first-level (62.1%) and second-level (25.7%), while the comparable figures for higher education in the U.S., West Germany and Japan are: 31.9, 18.8 and 10.5.

Most of the universities and colleges are, therefore, privately owned, twenty-one out of twenty-eight "major" universities being the case. Seoul has seventeen "major" universities, privately owned, out of eighteen.

3. Journalism Education

The first journalism department, established at Seoul's Hong-Ik College in 1954, disappeared in 1962. Professor Bok-san Kwak, a Japanese-educated Korean journalist and initiator of the journalism department, moved to Chung-ang University in 1957 to establish the second one. During the decade of the 1960s, six new journalism departments and one graduate school were established at: Ewha Women's (1960), Hanyang (1963), Korea (1965), Kyunghee (1966), Sungkyun-jwan (1967) and Sogang (1968). Seoul National University opened the Graduate School of Mass Communications in 1968 with an emphasis on the theoretical and practical training for the working journalist. This Graduate School disappeared in 1975 to become simply the journalism department. Yonsei University added a journalism department in 1972. Three other universities, including Kon-kuk, are teaching journalism subjects. No universities and colleges in provincial area have journalism departments or teach journalism courses.

In 1974, eighty-nine students received master's degrees in journalism: 75 from Seoul National, seven from Chung-ang, six from Ewha Women's, and one from Hanyang (Lim, 1974, p. 8). No doctorates have been locally produced. There were eleven doctorate holders, seven from the U.S. and the rest from Japan and Germany. About 1,080 students are enrolled for four-year undergraduate programs in journalism. The number of journalism graduates is estimated at 250 annually.

In Japan, Sophia University in Tokyo was the first institution to establish a formal journalism course in 1932. The early courses were patterned after work done in German universities. Since 1945, the American journalism education was introduced (Desmond, 1949, p. 35). F. L. Mott was in Japan in March-April, 1947 as a consultant to media practitioners and journalism educators. Waseda University in Tokyo first made their journalism courses independent of other departments in 1950.

In the U.S., the first four-year curriculum in journalism was installed in 1904 at the University of Illinois and the first separate school of journalism in 1908 at the University of Missouri. Columbia University's Pulitzer School of Journalism (1912), Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism (1921) and Harvard University's Nieman Program (1939) stressed practical training for working journalists (Emery, 1972, pp. 725-28).

Professional education for journalism has two principal functions: to educate young people in their chosen profession so as to work with competence, and to do research and study to share in the problems of the press to dedicate to the society. Walter Lippmann (1967) said journalism is no longer:

> "a minor craft which can be learned by serving an apprenticeship to a practicing newspaper editor. The press as a whole must be capable of reporting and explaining, interpreting and critizing, all the activities of mankind"(Nixon, 1970, p. 12).

A major part of the instruction must combine theory and practice. Journalism education in Korea, in this regard, faces some fundamental problems related to the rise of professional education for journalism: the educational deficiencies--little practical experience by students and "theoretical nature" of much of the instruction--and little relationship

between the output of the schools and the job market.

Journalism departments face "lack of teaching materials and testbooks", "lack of research", "lack of lab equipment", and "lack of opportunity for practical experience". The likely result is that instructors, students and media practitioners blame each other. Students complain that instructors are inexperienced and that instruction is not practical. Media practitioners say journalism educators do not teach what the press needs. Journalism instructors blame "lack of teaching materials" and "lack of equipment".

Media practitioners look far from understanding the importance of professional journalism education. It is probably because there is no single person in the office or management who is from the journalistic career in the case of Korean newspaper industry (Yu, 1972, p. 32).

There is no coordination between journalism departments and media agencies. This seems inevitable due to a short history of media industry and journalism education.

Despite the fact that university journalism departments were founded at the request of the press, it is the press that turns cold shoulders to the training program. This situation is ascribed to the tendency among universities to give higher priority to theories which have little application to practical press service (Cho, 1972, p. 128).

The hiring procedure by the press makes the coordination unlikely. No newspaper has ever changed its traditional hiring practice since the time when there were no journalism majors. The standardized recruiting prodedure for reporters (by all media agencies) is to test all applicants in the subjects of English, Korean, and their grasp of current events and composition. The

test is hardly related to journalism majors, being equally applicable to anyone. No professional journalism education is counted. The result is that few journalism majors get the media job. The successful applicants practice a three-to-twelve month in-service training, as their predecessors did, to be regular reporters.

A critic says that university journalism education programs are as yet far from adequate due to a shortage of experienced teaching staff and necessary instructional facilities. As a result, few of the graduates of journalism departments pass the tests for employing reporters administered by various newspaper companies and radio-television agencies (Cho, 1972, p. 128).

The blame should not be so one-sided. Journalism educators and media people deserve mutual blame. Unless media employers change their hiring practice, they can hardly expect that only 250 journalism majors will outcompete some 57,432 non-journalism majors under the same conditions. The total number of college graduates is annually 57,682. Unless some appropriate measures are taken, the end result, as a critic points out, would be:

> "Universities setting up degree factories which produce people quite different to what the media want and the media themselves bashing away with a variety of in-service programs of varying effectiveness in an effort to get the people they want. And this split between the academic communicators and the practitioners is one of the most unproductive areas of the present situation, particularly in the developing part of the world"(Anderson, 1973, p. 41).

Efforts should be directed towards cooperation and understanding between journalism departments and media agencies. Journalism educators can invite senior reporters, even if they have no professional education, to teach the practical courses like professional writing, which are needed in the media

practice. Their media experience will enable them to teach practical courses. This will also increase their interest in professional education. Media people can, instead, rely on journalism educators for theoretical and research matters which they cannot handle. The employing procedure can be, gradually, if not radically, directed toward hiring more journalism majors by requiring a certain portion of professional education to be applicable for the media job.

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